

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

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Claim 10 (original). A method for reducing emissions from automotive vehicles; the method including the steps of:

providing an automotive vehicle having a fuel tank and a fuel tank fill tube in fluid communication with the fuel tank;

providing a replacement gas cap configured to close the fuel tank fill tube, the replacement gas cap including a good quality sealing surface capable of sealing the fuel tank fill tube against fuel vapor leakage;

providing a message-bearing element bearing a message worded to remind an automotive vehicle operator to accomplish a task related to vehicle emission reduction;

providing the message-bearing element on the replacement gas cap;

removing any existing gas cap from the fuel tank fill tube; and

installing the replacement gas cap in a sealing relationship on the fuel tank fill tube.

Claim 11 (currently amended). The method of claim 10 in which the step of providing a message-bearing element includes the step of providing a message recommending accomplishment of one or more tasks selected from [of a] the group of tasks [including:] consisting of replacing the gas cap, accomplishing vehicle maintenance, purchasing a product, purchasing a service, inspecting the vehicle for safety problems, and testing vehicle emission levels.

Claim 12 (original). The method of claim 10 in which the step of providing a message-bearing element includes the step of providing a gas cap cover device on the replacement gas cap, the cover device bearing the message and including a shell configured to be disposed over a portion of a gas cap and a connector supported on the shell and configured to engage the gas cap and cause the gas cap to rotate when the cover device is rotated.

Claim 13 (original). The method of claim 10 in which the step of installing the gas cap is accomplished before the step of providing the message-bearing element.

Claim 14 (original). The method of claim 10 including the additional step of repeating the steps of claim 10 for each of a plurality of automotive vehicles as part of a gas cap exchange program.

Claim 15 (original). The method of claim 14 including the additional steps of:

estimating vehicle emission reduction due to replacement of leaking or missing gas caps; and

claiming a corresponding quantity of Mobile Emission Reduction Credits.

Claim 16 (original). The method of claim 15 including the additional step of selling the Mobile Emission Reduction Credits to a pollution point source to help fund the gas cap exchange program.

Claim 17 (original). The method of claim 15 in which the step of estimating vehicle emission reduction includes the steps of:

testing old replaced gas caps to determine their individual fuel vapor leakage rates;

calculating the total projected tonnage of fuel vapor that leaking and missing caps would have released into the atmosphere had they not been replaced; and

calculating a total Mobile Emission Reduction Credit value by multiplying the projected tonnage of fuel vapor emissions by a predetermined present value of a single Mobile Emission Reduction Credit.

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